Feeding the mind: the development of food categories and its association with food neophobia and pickiness in young children

PhD :
Camille RIOUX

Preview :
Food rejections of 3-6 years old children have concerning consequences on health notably because they mostly concern fruits and vegetables. The impact of food rejections extends well beyond childhood since dietary habits acquired during childhood largely determine dietary patterns in adulthood. It is therefore essential to promote the adoption of healthy eating behaviors among young children. Current awareness campaigns are not sufficiently effective, especially among young children. Therefore, a better understanding of the cognitive mechanisms underlying different kinds of food rejections (neophobia, picky/fussiness, ...) would be helpful to design effective interventions in ecological settings such as school canteens. The theoretical aim of this PhD project is to determine the role of one of these mechanisms, the categorization of food items, in food rejections. The practical goal is to develop and test the effectiveness of interventions in school canteens, so as to promote the acceptability of rejected food as well as a more diverse diet.

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